MAK and BAT values used in Germany. A valuable introductory chapter on the significance and use of MAK values is included: much basic regulatory toxicology can be learnt from this section.

Many compounds have been allocated MAK values and these are listed in an easy to read table. Formally, and notes on carcinogenesis, reproductive toxicology and vapour pressure of the compounds are included. Carcinogens are treated separately and here again the discussion is helpful, with lists of carcinogens and suspected carcinogens provided.

Should you buy this book? It is dubious whether doctors practising occupational medicine in the United Kingdom will think this book valuable: for international companies with branches in Germany it is essential.

R L MAYNARD

Biological Exposure Values for Occupational Toxicants and Carcinogens. Critical Data Evaluation for BAT and EKA Values. Volume 1. Edited by D HENSCHLER, G LEHNERT. (Pp 235; price DM 158·00.) 1994. Weinheim, Federal Republic of Germany: VCH Verlagsgsellschaft mbH. ISBN 3 527 27032 9.

This volume is an English translation, originally published in German, of the conclusions of a Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft Working Group charged with recommending BAT (biological tolerance values) and EKA (exposure equivalents for carcinogenic substances) values. Over the past 10 years, the Working Group has set 51 BAT values. This volume contains the documentation for 22 substances and includes 19 BAT and 3 EKA values. The editors have plans to publish further volumes covering the remaining substances.

In setting biological exposure values, the Working Group distinguishes between those substances for which a BAT can be set that will prevent adverse health effects and carcinogens, for which they take the view that it is not possible to establish a safe level. In this case as a limit value cannot be set, biological exposure equivalents (EKA), which are based on the relation between airborne exposure and the concentration of the substance in blood or urine are reported. Data are presented for alkali chromates, cobalt, and pentachlorophenol.

This volume describes the mechanism used by the Working Group for arriving at a BAT value. The scientific literature for each substance is scrutinised and summarised according to an agreed protocol. Documentation is given for a BAT aluminium, fluoride, and a range of organic substances (including carbon disulphide, dichloromethane, phenol, and tetrachloroethane). It is evident that in many cases, the data are very limited, and that some BAT values that have been proposed might be more accurately described as exposure based rather than health based. The BAT values for at least six substances are listed as "provisional" because in the opinion of the Working Group there are insufficient data to set a health based limit.

This is a useful volume that shows the scientific basis and process adopted in Germany for setting BAT values. One cannot help notice, however, that for a number of substances reported in this volume, the data are over 10 years old. It is a pity the authors did not take the opportunity to update their submissions before publishing this English edition.

This book will be of interest to occupational health professionals, physicians, hygienists and technical policymakers interested in the interpretation of biological monitoring and effect monitoring data and in the setting of health guidance values and benchmarks.

H K WILSON

Lexicon of alcohol and drug terms, 1st edition. Compiled by T BABOR, R CAMPBELL, R ROOM, J SAUNDERS, for the World Health Organisation (Pp 65; price Swiss franks 17.-.) 1994. Office of Publications, World Health Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organisation. ISBN 92 4 154468 6.

This book provides concise, accurate, and up to date definitions of terms encountered frequently in the clinical, social science, and research literature about substance abuse. Psychological, social, clinical, and pharmacological aspects are well represented in an easy to read style with ample cross referencing, making the book acceptable to the international multidisciplinary readership for which it is intended. Terms that are misused frequently or that have a multifaceted interpretation, such as "dependence" and "withdrawal" are explained particularly well.

Some readers may find certain definitions rather simplistic or too complex but this is to some extent inevitable within the confines of a small reference text written for a wide audience. For example, clinical details are comprehensive but include terms such as "dysarthria", "hyperacusis"and "nystagmus", with which the non-clinician may be unfamiliar. Others may feel that to define "needle-sharing" as "the use of syringes . . . by more than one person . . ." falls outside the objective of the lexicon "to define what is not self-explanatory".

This book is likely to prove particularly useful to those who require clear, contemporary definitions for purposes of teaching, publication, or professional discourse. Students of medicine, nursing, and allied sciences and those for whom English is not their first language will find it a helpful reference source. It is a pity that the authors chose to exclude slang terms; a guide to these would have been helpful, interesting, and probably entertaining!

S M BRADBURY

Hunter's Diseases of Occupations, 8th ed. Edited by P A B RAFFLE, P H ADAMS, P J BAXTER, W R LEE. (Pp 804; price £145.) London: Edward Arnold. ISBN 0-340-55173-9.

This is the latest edition of Hunter's famous textbook about diseases of occupations. Many people reading this review will have seen or will possess an earlier edition. If you do have an earlier edition, hold on to it. You will need it for the section on the history of occupational diseases that has sadly had to be jettisoned from this edition because of lack of space. Nor should you imagine that this textbook is all you need for the practice of occupational medicine; as the Editors make quite clear in the Preface, this book is *only* about occupational diseases (their causation, features, and management) and does not pretend to cover all the other facets of the practice of occupational medicine. Also, although there is brief mention made of the effects of harmful environmental exposures, the book does not cover this aspect in any detail.

This is a weighty tome: 2 kg on my kitchen scales. I confess to an aversion to large textbooks, so it took some time and various threats from my friendly book review editor to induce me to take the plunge into this book. When I did, I was pleasantly surprised. Overall, this is a good book and an improvement upon recent previous editions. It presents a review of knowledge on the whole spectrum of occupational diseases, with some useful background material on mechanisms and medico-legal aspects (including compensation). Although it is long, this is a reflection of the breadth of subject matter it covers rather than of the space allotted to each topic. None of the chapters is verbose for the sake of it. Some can be read right through (for example, the chapters on neurotoxic effects and vibration) whereas others (for example, the chapters on metals and organic chemical compounds) are clearly more suitable for reference purposes. There is inevitably some repetition when topics are approached from different angles, starting from the exposure or from the body system affected, but the cross referencing is good and I found no glaring inconsistencies.

The idea of what constitutes an "occupational disease" has evolved as work patterns and concepts of disease have changed. This 8th edition of Hunter's work includes material on newer conditions related to work, with chapters on indoor air pollution (including sick building syndrome), repeated movements and repeated trauma (including repetitive strain injury), and stress at work. It is good to see these areas covered but this highlights a problem with textbooks: they can never be fully up to date and they may give one particular view on issues that are not yet resolved. The problem of one sided treatment has been largely avoided here, at the expense of seeming rather vague at times, but the lack of the most recent references was irritating in some places. For example, the issue of whether or not exposure to low level electromagnetic fields from visual display unit equipment can lead to miscarriages could have been dealt with more definitely if the more recent research results had been included.

Who will this book be of interest to? It is, of course, aimed at clinicians in general rather than the small band of doctors and other professionals who would call themselves occupational health specialists. It is a useful reference book for clinicians, provided they know of its existence in their local library. Another group who are apparently making much use of this book as an authoritative source are lawyers with an interest in occupational diseases; perhaps this is a sign of the times. Candidates for the Associate of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine will find it useful but perhaps do not need their own copies. Personally, I think I will use this book from